

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1909, MARCH 24, 6 PM MESSAGE CENTER

DEPARTMENT G-261.

THERE HAS BEEN NO CAMPAIGN IN SOVIET PRESS TRUMPETING "WAR PSYCHOSIS" IN U.S. ON CONTRARY, NOTICEABLE EFFORTS MADE FAIRLY CONSISTENTLY SINCE NOVEMBER TO REASSURE SOVIET POPULATION BY MODERATE TONE AND "LOGIC" THAT NO GRAVE RISK OF WAR OVER BERLIN EXISTS. HOWEVER, IN LIGHT AND SCATTERED COVERAGE, IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CONVEYED THAT ELEMENTS OF HYSTERIA AND INCIDENTS OF HIGH BELLIGERENCY HAVE OCCURRED IN U.S., INCLUDING CALLS FOR MOBILIZATION, FOR USE OF FORCE IN BERLIN CRISIS, AND EVEN FOR MODIFICATION OF POLICY OF NOT STRIKING FIRST BLOW. EXCEPTIONAL FEATURE ARTICLE BY PRUDKOV IN LITERARY GAZETTE, MARCH 10, TITLED "HYSTERIA IN WASHINGTON" IS BY FAR MOST COMPLETE AND STRIDENT SUCH ITEM TO COME TO EMBASSY'S ATTENTION. TYPICAL IN TONE, SUBSTANCE AND TREATMENT ARE: IZVESTIA ON ADMIRAL BURKE FEBRUARY 22; SOVIET FLEET ON ADMIRALS BURKE AND RADFORD MARCH 8; PRAVDA REPORTING GFR INDIGNATION AT GENERAL TAYLOR MARCH 17; AND TODAY'S LITERARY GAZETTE FEATURE WHICH REVIEWS MILITARISM AND WAR HYSTERIA IN WEST BUT ASSERTS THAT PRESENT AND GROWING STRENGTH OF BLOC MAKES WAR UNLIKELY.

EXAMPLES OF REASSURANCE ARE COVERAGE OF SENATOR MANSFIELD PROPOSAL; MACMILLAN-KHRUSHCHEV AND, MORE RECENTLY, EISENHOWER EMPHASIS ON NEGOTIATIONS.

INDEPENDENT OF ABOVE IS UNCHANGING STEADY BASIC SOVIET LINE THAT US AND ALLIES' FUNDAMENTAL STRATEGY IS PREPARATION OF AGGRESSIVE WAR AGAINST USSR. RECENT U.S. BILATERALS PRODUCED FLURRY OF SUCH ITEMS, AMONG MOST RECENT IS SOVIET FLEET ON U.S. ROCKET BASES, MARCH 21.

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ALL OF ABOVE EXAMPLES AND MANY OTHERS REPORTED IN DAILY EMBASSY PRESS TELEGRAMS. PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL BE GIVEN TO FUTURE SOVIET DOMESTIC MEDIA TREATMENT OF LIKELIHOOD OF WAR AT PRESENT EMBASSY JUDGES THAT PUBLIC MORE CONCERNED OVER WAR THREAT THAN BEFORE SOVIET "BERLIN PEACE INITIATIVE", BUT LESS THAN AT HEIGHT OF SUEZ OR QUEMOY CRISIS. EMBASSY HAS HEARD ON RUMORS OF HOARDING, WHICH WERE PREVALENT DURING BOTH EARLIER PERIODS.

THOMPSON

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